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REFLECTIONS

Upon Two Scurrilous

LIBELS,

Called

Speculum Crape-Gownorum.

By a Lay-man.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Benjamin Tooke at the Ship in St. Pauls
Church-yard, 1682.

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REFLECTIONS, &c.



AMONG all the filly Scurrilous Libels, that have been Printed since the Liberty of the Press, I never saw such a medley of Malice, and Nonsense, as this piece of Plagiarism. And indeed 'tis an Affront to any common Reader to suppose him not able to see how ridiculous a Trifle it is. But because I perceive the Scribler values himself upon it, and has put out a Second Part, and sets up for an Author; I thought fit to give him a view of himself in his own Looking-Glass, that he may, if he have any Sense or Ingenuity left, forbear to expose himself any further, when he knows how ridiculous he must needs appear to all, but such as cannot, or will not judg.

I have good reason to suspect this Looking-glass-maker was expelled one of the Universities (if he were ever so happy as to *prevail with some Pedagogue to recommend him thither*) or denied Orders for his dulness, or debauchery, or both: sure I am he deserves to be banish'd the Society of all Men of common Sense for the first, whatever he may for the latter. But 'tis but a poor, impertinent revenge thus to rave against the Universities, and Clergy; when all the World knows there never was less reason. Those,

which he so much contemns of two or three years Standing, would undergo a severe Censure, if in any Exercise they should vent so much Nonsense, as this Fop has done in his little Scribble. And there is no part of Learning in which the conforming Clergy have not shewn themselves eminently skilful. Their Sermons are famous throughout our Neighbour-Nations, and their Style as good generally as that of any other Order of Men; yea many of them write in so expressive, and exact a manner, and with so true a Genius, that they out-do all that has ever been Written in the *English* Tongue, and may deservedly be compared to the *Romans* and *Grecians* themselves. Mr. Baxter himself confesses (in his Book against Dr. *Stillingfleet*) that they are but too exact. But whatever he acknowledges, I think, I may with modesty say, Our Sermons almost equal the powerful pious Eloquence of the first Ages of the Church: I wish the practice of our times were as like that of the Primitive Christians, as the Preaching is.

The People now begin to see the Difference between Enthusiastick Cant, and a sober rational Discourse; and this makes our Libeller under Pretence of inveighing against bad Preaching, exclaim against all Preaching in General, and call it *Prating*, &c. Though this was the beloved Ordinance of his dear Dissenting Brethren, when they inveighed, and infatuated the poor People into Rebellion, and play'd worse Pranks in their Pulpits, than the most extravagant Farce durst present upon a Stage.

But I shall only mention this, because 'tis notorious; but must take notice withal, that, whatever absurdities this man pretends our Clergy guilty off, I doubt

doubt they are collected out of Nonconformists Sermons, and he might have gone no further, than his own Conventicle-Note-Book for 'em. Sure I am, nothing of Stile can be more slovenly, or unhandsom, than most of their Writings, as I could easily make appear, if it were not every mans observation; and the *Dissenters Sayings* will sufficiently shew it, where you have the most hellish Opinions set forth, in the ugliest Dress, being a compleat Epitome of the whole *Black Art*.

But I come now to examine with what modesty this man can censure other mens Stile, or pretend to be so great a Master of it himself.

The Church of England — is the closest to Primitive Institution of any Religion in the World. So that Church and Religion with him are all one, and the Religion professed by the Church of England is the Church it self; and by Church-Militant, we must mean Religion militant. But I doubt all this is but Complement, and is not without the *Phylacteries of Hypocritical Ceremonies* (as he quaintly words it.)

The Nation is so over-stock'd with Crape-Gowns that — What? that he must needs give his Pamphlet a silly Pedantick Title, as ridiculous as any thing mentioned in it? Well! but he had reason for it; he was loth this pretty conceit should be lost — *An ill Omen of sick divinity when it comes to be mantled in the shrouds appropriated for the dead.* This facetious, lucky Touch put him upon inventing the Title, and then who could forbear writing a Book, that had such a Title for it? A Title well chosen, that nicks the business, is commonly the most Taking Part of a bad Book, and if it be in Latin, the Vul-

gar Readers like it the better, because he does not understand it. But whoever said, *Appropriated for*? I thought things had been appropriated To, and not For, till this Critick came forth.

They will do well to accept of this Mirror here presented them new soyled and furbish'd up, to be placed in their Studies, and look'd in every Morning — and by reforming their contemplated blemishes, &c. Admirable! Was it not worth his while to call his Pamphlet a *Looking-Glass* for the sake of this fustian Allegory? Thus we have the reason of his Crape and of his Looking-glass; now put these two together and you have a Scheme of the whole Work so exact, that you may easily discern, what is stoln, and what is his own in it: for this Title, I assure you, is a Master-piece, and all the rest is but the same at large, that you have here in little.

Thus I have traced him through little more than his first Page, which is the least obnoxious to Censure of any in the whole Libel, so that the Reader may judg by this, what he must expect from such a Coxcomb, (to use a Term of Art, by which he complements the ingenious Author of *Heraclitus*, and restore the word to him, 'tis *appropriated for*.)

No Plagiary Looking-Glass, pag. 2. That's a damned lye: for there is scarce three words of sense, but what is stoln out of a Book, entitled *The Reasons, and Grounds of the Contempt, &c.*

He refers the reason of the contempt of the Clergy to two very plain things; the Ignorance of some, and the Poverty of others: but sure I am, if this man be as poor as he is ignorant, no Clergy-man in England will change conditions with him. Then he exclaims
against

against slavery to a few *Greek* and *Latin* words, and I commend him, for I dare swear he understands neither in any tolerable manner; no, nor *English* any more than a *Ballad-singer*, or merry *Andrew*. Next he is mightily displeased with a tedious story how *Phaeton* broke his Neck: but if the Dunce had known the *moral*, it might have deterred him from undertaking a Task so much above him. Why he should be so angry with poor *Tityrus's* Apples and Nuts, I can't imagine, unless it be because he has been lash'd at School for not construing *Virgil's Eclogues*, and so now in his Buffoon way he disparages, what has been so highly valued by all men of Wit, and Learning, and is incomparably better than any thing he seems ever to have read.

But I must have a care what I do, for he that writes against this Author may disoblige more than one man; for the least Part of his Book is his own. I shall pass therefore from the 2d *pag.* to the 15. for all between is stoln, only a flourish or two perhaps by the by to make it look fillily, and like his own. I confess some things there mentioned are so grossly foolish, that I can hardly believe any one would ever please himself in 'em, but that I hope to make it appear our Author has pleased himself in as bad. I desire him or any man else to instance in any one of the conforming Clergy, that has vented any such thing, and till he does, all this is at random, and impertinent malice. Most of what he produces, I grant, is meer Cant and Jargon, only some few things, methinks might be excused, as this, *My Text divides it self into, &c.* For *Virgil* says,

— *Partes ubi se via findit in ambas:*

And why a Text has not as much power to divide it self as a way to cleave it self, I cannot understand. But I shall not undertake to defend any mans extravagancies, I know none that are guilty of so gross ones, nor I believe our Plagiary neither.

To pass to what is his own, I shall give you his Complements to the Clergy, and his dull fulsom Buffoon expressions, as they come in my way, that any ordinary Reader may judg how capable this man is of being a Critick.

The instances set down *pag. 15.* are his own, and I desie him to prove any Minister ever said any such thing in the Pulpit or elsewhere; which if he cannot do, he must pass for a notorious Lyar?

Every Whiffler in Divinity pag. 16. Too much Prating in English in our great Cities — and all this to feed the Ostentation of our Pulpit-threshers. ib. So then he's for Preaching in an unknown Tongue, for Preaching in *English* is Prating. But, pray, mind the coherence: He blames some for going to Coffee-houses (as if those places were appropriated for Sedition, or the Physitian were to be blamed for visiting the Pest-house) and others, for *banding* young, brisk Ladies (though *St. Paul* asks the Question, *have not we the Power to lead about a Sister?*) as if there were not laced *Cravats* and *Ruffles* enough about the Town for this amorous Employment; and then continues, *To say truth, we have too much Prating in English, &c.* if there be any dependence in this, I'll yield he can write sense.

Hackney.

Hackney-Sermon-Makers, ib. *Were Sermons therefore less frequent, they would be much more valued: for then would men have time to meditate, and their abortive irreverences, would not drop so often from their mouths without soul or life, as not having staid their time in womb of meditation*, ib. There's a stroke of Art for you! Would not any one think this Fellow had served his time to a Mid-wife? *I will appeal to the reason of any man whether it be within the verge of mortality (there's Language without affectation) to invent a more fulsome Allegory? No; for a person to preach at six in Corn-hil — by ten at St. Martins Outwich, &c.* Why not? if he have lungs enough: what does the Blunderer mean? Well! *it is impossible that such a superabundance should be other than the Riff Raff and Quicquid in Buccam venerit of a mercenary brain*, pag. 17. — *The light of such a Star of the first magnitude in the firmament of the Church of England, or the clouded reflections of meer Divinity Meteors, that run whisking up and down to vent their undigested Conceits, as the wind of their phantastical Doctrines agitates 'em*. ib. Now I should fancy this Jolt-head seeks to advance his reputation by affected words, or affected and obscure Notions. *Young Officers of Divinity*, pag. 18. *pitiful striplings, illiterate old Mumbler*s, ib. *some underling twelve pound a year Disciple*, ib. *Alms-Man-teacher of a Parish*, pag. 19.

But I perceive I am saln upon his stoln goods again, I shall therefore only take notice of his *Diminutive Divine*, and pass to pag. 21.

They who are disnabled from the Purchasing part, are no way to be entrusted with the Teaching part. A great pity no doubt that thus it should be, for there are

certainly no doubt, &c. No doubt, certainly, no doubt! he is much afraid he should be thought to doubt of any thing.

Next for a touch of Politicks. — Now whether it be most convenient to make Ministers for Churches, or Churches for Ministers, is the Question, but the Proverb is, Talk of any thing but building Churches: for if we build more Churches, we must make more land for endowment: which cannot be done without drying up of the Sea and that's a very difficult task. What a smart Paraphrase he makes upon a poor Proverb!

The Latin ones (Book-sellers shops) they seldom haunt as being out of their Sphere — Dissenters men of more understanding than themselves (than Conformists) ib. Of this let all impartial men judge.

Crape-Gown-men pag. 22. Like the Disciples of Haly and Mahomet, ib. That's an employment without the verge of Reprehension, ib. It seems he is hugely taken with Verges, and Spheres. Like the Popes white Boys, ib. Fanaticism and Dissenterism is the Mode now. True; and so is Foolism, and Ignoranism.

Now his fit of gravity takes him again, and he talks pragmatically of what he does not understand, and therefore he had better taken example of our Crape-Gown-men; Who (he says,) think it more convenient to let them alone (the Papists) than to betray their folly and their ignorance.

But with a jerk he puts off his Asses gravity, and is at his Monkey-tricks again. — a lazy Coffee-drinking life, pag. 15. to suffocate what God has so miraculously detested, ib. The Plot, I suppose, he means: but whan sense is it to choak a Plot? But we must pardon him, he takes Choaking and Stifling to be the same,

same, whereas stifling is but one way of Choaking, and he might as well have said the Plot was kill'd, or, in his own strain, Enecated. For in such expressions the manner of doing is principally aimed at, and the doing the thing only imply'd, and scarce attended to.

They (the Clergy) pretend themselves Sons and Children, ib. What, does he think there are any Daughter Clergy-men? *Colloquing adherence to the fascinations of Rome. That's great! I assure you. When some men get into the Pulpit, they are so rampant, so Hoity Toity, they know not where their Tails hang, pag. 24.* As others are, when they get in Print.

In the next place, commend me to that incomparable and admirable Translation of a piece of Latin printed by the Ludgate Excommunicator, Nunquam nec Albiani, nec Nigriani, nec Cassiani inveniri poterunt Christiani, i. e. Never was a true Christian found a Traytor to his Prince. *This 'tis to have a sharpness and acuteness of wit beyond the common reach of mankind, ib.* This 'tis to be dull and impertinent! In my opinion a very little search into History might have taught this Glass-maker, that *Albiani, &c.* are denominations of traiterous factions in the Empire, and then by the help of a little Logick, he might have concluded, that what is denied of all the Parts is denied of the whole; and then where's the fault in the Translation? I desire him to get it translated better, or not to meddle with things he does not understand. But what has this Fellow to do to defame a Clergy-man for doing his duty, his Function obliges him to, in excommunicating wilful, stubborn Offenders, according to the Laws in force in this

and all other Nations in the Christian World, as well as to the injunction of the Gospel, and the constant practice of the Church in all Ages? Is the Law defective, if any man act otherwise than he ought, in a matter of so high Concern? or must men stand to the Arbitrement of every Rascally Scribler? or do they think to scare men out of their Duty? If any man act contrary to Law, let them accuse him Legally, and not Post him up at every Book-sellers stall. But the Laws themselves cannot escape these mens venom, if they contradict their refractory humour; witness the Laws against Conventicles, &c.

But I have wearied my self in tracing him thus far, and therefore shall let his Essay of a Sermon alone; and I hope by this time such an estimate may be made of the Libeller, that no man will have any extraordinary opinion of his Parts or Honesty. For what man that has the least esteem for Religion, or but common Civility to the Ministers of it, would in so scurrilous a manner treat the meanest and most contemptible of the Clergy, as if their very Function ought not to secure them from buffoonery, and reproachful, malicious, invective Language? Or what would expose his malice so ridiculously as to stuff out a Pamphlet with another mans wit impertinently applied, and commit the very faults himself, that at the same time he condemns in others, but an Ideot to all Learning and good manners?

I am sensible, I have omitted many things, I might have taken notice of (and so I must needs do, unless I should transcribe the whole) particularly two or three Latin Scraps, though he derides others, that *spice and besprinkle their Harangues with Greek and Latin*

Latin Sentences : but he may the more easily be excused for not avoiding such indecencies, because those that are worth any thing, are not his own observations, and he forgot 'em, as soon as he had transcribed 'em.

Upon the whole, I must apply his own words (his own I call 'em, but the Reader will easily guess if any of them be stoln) and desire all men to observe how *the poor man has laboured to make an Ass of himself: and to judg whether he has not shewn an equal composition of Discretion, Learning, and Charity, of each two drams: but then how strangely conceited are they, that after a long consideration, serious meditation (what pity 'tis womb of Meditation would not come in here too!) and recollection of mind, are so vain as to put their Conundrums, their Quibbles, and their Quibus's in Print?*

I suppose this taste will be sufficient to shew the Scribler is not capable of writing any thing, that will bear Censure, or satisfy any man of ordinary understanding: else I assure the Reader, I could with as much ease have exposed his Second Part. But because, I doubt the Reader by this time is as weary as my self, of such *Bankside and froth* (to give him his Character in his own civil Language) of *this Jack-pudding to the Bear-garden*, I shall pass by this Ribaldry, his slip-slap slip-slap, his Hoytic, Toytic, and all his little Conceits, which I suppose, he took in Short-hand at some Mountebanks stage, (for he has more ways of stealing, than one without doubt) I shall take no notice of his *So Almighty*, as if there were degrees in Omnipotency; nor of his Greek and Hebrew in Latin Characters neither: For what's that

to me? he is but a Transcriber; let every man do as he can, and take it, as he finds it, at the highest hand; Why should a man be troubled with more Languages than will serve his turn? Now he took upon him to write against the number of Scholars (Part 1. p. 1.) who knows but his next pique may be at the number of Languages?

I with the Dissenters much joy of his Arguments (*Never was ever, &c.*) in behalf of Conventicles, which has been urged above forty times (as most of theirs have) within this half year, and answered as often, but he has dress'd it up so apishly in false Mode and Figure, and expos'd it so unluckily, that, I hope, any one will be ashamed to use it after him.

And so I have quitted my self of the biggest part of his Book, which is nothing but a piece of Farce between the two Dialogists, or a Trial of Skill, which should express their Non-sense with more agreeable Grace in wretched Pun and Quibble. I shall take notice then only of two or three choice Notions, which are very extraordinary for their extravagance, and entirely new, and so I suppose his own.

First, he says, Ministers ought to insist upon Generals, and leave the Particulars to the Hearers, that is, they ought to teach Obedience in General, but wherein that Obedience consists, or what is agreeable to it, they ought not pretend to determine. His reason is, because the Scripture treats only of Generals and has neither *Magna Charta*, nor the Oath of Allegiance in it. So then our Casuistical Divinity is all gone at a dash, and besides the Censures, and Discipline of the Church are quite taken away; for what can the Church censure but by its Ministers? and what falls
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under Censure, but particular Actions? And what more heinous, and so more worthy of Censure than Disobedience? Most men understand the General Heads of their Duty, but what particulars fall under those Heads is not so easily known, and to explain this is the proper work of a Preacher. Every one knows an Oath obliges, suppose the Oath of Allegiance, or the Oath taken by Jurors; but if a Minister sees men act contrary to this Oath, whether out of wilfulness or ignorance, ought he not to admonish them of the sin? I should think his sin as great as theirs, if he did not; for his very Function obliges him to it, and he breaks the most solemn Vow that can be made to God, if he neglect it. I confess the same thing falls differently under the consideration of a Lawyer and of a Divine; the one considers it as matter of Law, the other as matter of Conscience, yet every Action as it concerns the Conscience, so it belongs to the Divine, and if the niceties of Law make the Case doubtful, yet still the Divine is to direct the doubting, or scrupulous Conscience.

Certainly our Ancestors thought Divines might judge not only whether a Law were obey'd or no; but even of the matter it self, before the enacting of the Law, whether it were agreeable to Gods Word; and this, I make no Question, is one reason why our Bishops sit in Parliament. Now 'tis much more easie to judge what the Law obliges to, than to know whether that Obligation be valid, that is, allowable by Scripture and Reason, though this indeed be essential to every Law properly so called.

His most matchless heroic Attempt is yet behind, for which, I suppose, he promises himself no small reward
from

from the Faction, and to keep a Hank upon them, and to seare us to an humble submission at the same time: he threatens, he has more to say, and if we take no care to oblige him, all shall out: so it seems, we must buy this shrewd man off, or we are utterly undone. Well! but perhaps there may be no such great danger yet. — *If the Presbyterians do hold King-killing Doctrine, they learned it from the Church of England-men, pag. 21.* And then after a tedious impertinence between the two Dialogists, he adds, *Why then I say you do not read in any story, since the growth of Christianity, that ever any crowned Head was ever brought to a formal Bar of Justice, till Mary Queen of Scots was arraigned, tryed, convicted, sentenced, and formally beheaded by Queen Elizabeth, and the Clergy were a part of the Body, that pressed and urged the Queen to hasten her Execution.*

Here he compares the Queen of Scots to King Charles the Martyr, Queen Elizabeth to Oliver Cromwel, the loyal Nobility and Gentry of her days to the *Doegs* of the Rabble and Refuse of all the Sects in Christendom in 48. and all this meerly out of a wretched design to prove the Church of *England* as bad as the Phanaticks. But what is there alike in these two Cases? The one was a Dependant Queen, and under legal Conviction of Attempts upon the Crown: the other an absolute Sovereign Prince, that neither had given the least reason of suspicion to his People of any design of invading their Rights, nor ought they to have taken Arms against him, if he had given it: the one was put to death by Foreigners, in a foreign Countrey, at the command of a foreign Prince; the other in his own Kingdom, beside his own Palace, by his

his own Subjects, at the command of a most bloody Tyrant, and Usurper.

But in short, The Queen of Scots was put to death justly, or unjustly; it justly, where's the fault? if unjustly, yet 'twas not by her own Subjects: Nor does the Doctrine of the Church of *England* allow it, if it were unjust, as the Doctrine as well as Practice of our Phanaticks does teach open Rebellion: let them shew, if they can, any one Tenet of our Church, which is seditious or any way pernicious to Government as plainly, as their whole Doctrine and Practice has appeared to all the World to be. But indeed since all those, whom this man follows, are of Opinion (as a thousand Pamphlets against the Succession witness) that she was justly put to death, 'tis but too plain, that this comparison was brought to justify the latter part of it, and not to condemn the former. As who should say, *You of the Church of England charge us with killing Charles I. and did not you kill the Queen of Scots? You did it justly we confess, but you ought to confess as much for us; for the case is parallel.* That this is his meaning is plain from pag. 5. Where he says; *However to talk like a Divine it was a Supreme Power (of those Usurpers of the late times) though set over us for our sins and our punishment, and most certain it is, that we and the Calvinists agree in this, that etiam infideli Magistratui obediendum est, with safety of Conscience. I only speak this to shew, that men ought not to urge upon the Conscience so severely, that were so nice of it themselves.* Here (*Infideli*) must be interpreted an Usurper, or else it makes nothing to his purpose (and by the way we may observe how aptly this man uses his little shreds of La-

ing) for the plain drift of his Argument is, That those who refused to obey *Oliver Cromwel*, ought to be favourable to the Phanaticks now, because the Authority commanding then, was equally lawful to be obeyed, as this is now, but the things enjoyned were scrupled. And thus he levels our lawful Sovereigns Authority, with the Usurpers, making it as necessary to obey one as the other; that is, in all things, that a man does not think in his Conscience unlawful.

He goes on, speaking of the Queen of Scots: *Could you blame her for Plotting, though she absolutely denied it, against a Person, that kept her from the enjoyment of her Kingdom, one that had deceived her with Chains, and Imprisonment, after she had made choice of her Kingdom for Sanctuary and assistance?* pag. 22. Did ever any Jesuit speak more maliciously of our Glorious Queen of blessed memory, than this impotent wretch does? But this is the common Cry of the Phanaticks, and a late Author in his *Harmony of Non-Conformists* (¶c.) has taken a great deal of pains to prove her *popishly Affected*. But this new invention of our Libeller to calumniate the Church of *England*, is a piece of so much folly as well as malice, that the Devil could never hope before to prevail upon any one to publish it.

Next follow his Cavils against some few late Sermons, and them too written by men of greater Learning and Worth, than any, his Conventicles could ever boast of. I shall only observe from them, how false his charge in the first Part is, which certainly he would have made good in these Reflections, if his malice had not out-run his wit. After all his false Glosses and sinister interpretations it amounts to but this; That a Complement, in his opinion, is strained too high, or
that

that a Text is understood otherwise by some Commentators. Only he is very severe upon the Gentleman that quoted *Valerius Maximus*, when he ought to have consulted *Plutarch*: because *Plutarch* he says, is the better Author, and he and *Valerius* don't agree in that particular: but he might have considered that that quotation is brought for illustration, and allusion, not in affirmation of any Historical Truth, so that whether one, or the other, or neither be in the right, it matters not. Besides, how does it appear that they disagree? *Plutarch* says *Sylla* died of a *Phthiriasis*, or *Morbus Pediculosus*; and *Valerius* that he died of Rage: What then? might not his Disease cause his Rage, and that be the immediate cause of his death? or might not his Disease be the cause why his Rage should so easily carry him off? so both may speak truth, though not all the truth. However this be, I am sure, our Author may be ashamed to own, he has ever seen *Plutarch*, or *Valerius Maximus* to so little purpose. I conclude with a Passage out of Dr. *Burnet's* Preface to the second Part of his History of the Reformation (whom I the rather quote, because he is so frequently quoted by our Dissenters upon all occasions) where after a just Character of our Bishops, he adds — "And
 "when I look into the Inferiour Clergy, there are,
 "chiefly about this great City of *London*, so many, so
 "eminent, both for the strictness of their lives, the
 "constancy of their labours, and plain way of Preaching,
 "which is now perhaps brought to as great a perfection
 "as ever was, since men spoke, as they received it immediately from the Holy Ghost; the great gentleness
 "of their deportment to such as differ from them, their
 "mutual love, and charity; and in a word, for all the
 "qualities

"qualities that can adorn Ministers or Christians; that
 "if such a number of such men cannot prevail with
 "this debauched Age, this one thing to me looks
 "more dismally, than all the other affrighting Symp-
 "toms of our Condition, that God having sent so
 "many faithful Teachers, their labours are still so in-
 "effectual.

T H E E N D.
